

Serial No.: 10/821,520

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REMARKS

Applicants' attorney thanks the Examiner for his comments in this Patent Application. This Amendment After Final Rejection is responsive to the 12 February 2008 final Office Action that explicitly vacates the 15 October 2007 final Office Action. Applicants also note the record contains a 06 February 2008 final Office Action which appears substantively equivalent to the 12 February 2008 final Office Action but lacking the Office communication signed by Examiner Ni that vacates the 15 October 2007 final Office Action based on a 11 January 2008 telephone interview (Applicants received a fax copy of this Office Communication on 29 January 2008).

In an effort to conclude prosecution of this Patent Application, Applicants have reversed the prior claim amendment and incorporated subject matter indicated as allowable both in the prior and the current Office Actions into the independent claims. Applicants intend to be fully responsive to any and all outstanding issues. Should this amendment not place this Patent Application in condition for allowance, Applicants' undersigned attorney respectfully requests a telephone call to resolve the outstanding issues.

No fee is required at this time as no new claims over those previously paid for have been added through this Amendment. Should any fee be required,

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Applicants urge that the Commissioner charge Deposit Account 19-3550 for any such fee. No new matter has been added by this amendment.

Amendment to the Claims

Claim 1 has been amended to remove previously added limitations and to recite limitations from Claim 3. The 06 April 2007 non-final Office Action and the current final Office Action state Claim 3 is objected to for depending from a rejected claim, but otherwise is indicated as containing allowable subject matter. Accordingly, Claim 3 has been canceled. New Claim 35 recites limitations of original Claim 2, previously canceled.

Claim 17, as submitted in the 08 October 2007 Amendment, has been amended to address the indefiniteness and antecedent basis issues (prior changes not shown with markings). Claim 17 has been amended to delete limitations added with the 08 October 2007 Amendment directed to the gap. Claim 17 has been further amended to recite limitations of Claim 3, as discussed above with respect to Claim 1.

Double Patenting

a) U.S. Patent Application 10/821,521

Rejection of Claims 1, 3-12 and 17-32 under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting over Claims 1-68 of U.S. Patent

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Application 10/821,521 is respectfully traversed. Applicants herewith file a terminal disclaimer obviating the obviousness-type double patenting rejection. Accordingly, this claim rejection should be withdrawn.

b) U.S. Patent Application 10/821,673

Rejection of Claims 1, 3-12 and 17-32 under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting over Claims 1-40 of U.S. Patent Application 10/821,673 is respectfully traversed. Applicants herewith file a terminal disclaimer obviating the obviousness-type double patenting rejection. Accordingly, this claim rejection should be withdrawn.

Claim Rejection - 35 U.S.C. § 102

The rejection of Claims 1, 6-12, 17-20 and 28-30 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Larson, U.S. Patent 4,536,623, is respectfully traversed. Applicants have amended independent Claims 1 and 17 to recite limitations of Claim 3, indicated as containing allowable subject matter. Accordingly, this claim rejection should be withdrawn.

Claim Rejection - 35 U.S.C. § 103

The rejection of Claims 21-23 and 26 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious over Larson in view of Carne, U.S. Patent 6,285,773, is respectfully

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traversed. Claims 21-23 and 26 depend from independent Claim 17. Applicants have amended independent Claim 17 to recite limitations of Claim 3, indicated as containing allowable subject matter. Accordingly, this claim rejection should be withdrawn.

Allowable Subject Matter

The Office Action indicates Claims 3-5 contain allowable subject matter, but depend from a rejected claim. Applicants believe the above Amendment and remarks place all claims in condition for allowance.

Conclusion

Applicants believe that the above Amendment addresses and overcomes each and every issue and rejection raised by the Examiner and therefore places the subject U.S. Patent Application into condition for allowance.

Respectfully submitted,



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